

Appln No. 10/027,824

Amdt date July 1, 2005

Reply to Office action of April 1, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for Viterbi decoding comprising:

receiving a sampled signal;

making a hard decision on which constellation point the sampled signal represents thereby creating a hard decision point;

determining a scaling factor (k) corresponding to the hard decision point; and

providing the scaling factor (k) and the hard decision to a Viterbi decoder,

wherein determining a scaling factor (k) corresponding to the hard decision point comprises:

selecting a first constellation point corresponding to the hard decision point;

determining a second constellation point corresponding to a nearest constellation point having the designated received bit; and

assigning a scaling factor value dependent on the number of constellation points between the first constellation point and the second constellation point.

Appln No. 10/027,824

Amdt date July 1, 2005

Reply to Office action of April 1, 2005

2. (Original) The method as in claim 1 wherein making a hard decision on which constellation point the sampled signal represents comprises choosing a constellation point which is the closest Euclidean distance to the received sample signal.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim ~~[[3]]~~1 wherein comparing the designated received bit to the hard decision to compute the scaling factor comprises reading the scaling factor from a look up table.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein reading the scaling factor from a look up table further comprises:-----

using the designated received bit and the hard decision to index into a look up table; and

reading the scaling factor from the look up table.

6. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim ~~[[3]]~~1 wherein comparing the designated received bit to the hard decision to compute the scaling factor comprises:

selecting a transition for which the scaling factor will be determined, thereby determining a selected transition;

determining a designated received bit that will result in the selected transition; and

comparing the designated received bit to the hard decision to compute the scaling factor.

Appln No. 10/027,824

Amdt date July 1, 2005

Reply to Office action of April 1, 2005

7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein assigning a scaling factor dependent on the number of constellation points between the first constellation point and the second constellation point comprises:

assigning a value of zero to the scaling factor if the first constellation point is equal to the second constellation point;

assigning a value of 1 if the first constellation point is adjacent to the second constellation point; and

assigning a value of $2N+1$ if the first constellation point is separated from the second constellation point by N constellation points.

8. (Original) The method as in claim 1 wherein determining a scaling factor (k) corresponding to the hard decision point further comprises:

determining a first scaling factor dependent on the location information of the hard decision;

determining a second scaling factor dependent on the signal to noise ratio of the channel; and

combining the first scaling factor with the second scaling factor to produce the scaling factor k .

9. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for decoding a signal, the apparatus comprising:

means for receiving a sampled signal;

means for making a hard decision on which constellation point the sampled signal represents;

Appln No. 10/027,824

Amdt date July 1, 2005

Reply to Office action of April 1, 2005

means for determining a scaling ~~sealing~~ factor (k) corresponding to the hard decision points; and

means for providing the scaling factor (k) and the hard decision to a Viterbi decoder,

wherein determining a scaling factor (k) corresponding to the hard decision point comprises:

selecting a first constellation point corresponding to the hard decision point;

determining a second constellation point corresponding to a nearest constellation point having the designated received bit; and

assigning a scaling factor value dependent on the number of constellation points between the first constellation point and the second constellation point.

10. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the means for determining the scaling factor (k) corresponding to the hard decision point further comprises:

means for determining a first scaling factor dependent on the location information of the hard decision;

means for determining a second scaling factor dependent on the signal to noise ratio of the channel; and

means for multiplying the first scaling factor to the second scaling factor to produce the sealing factor (k).

11. (Original) A method of signal decoding comprising:
accepting a received signal;

Appln No. 10/027,824

Amdt date July 1, 2005

Reply to Office action of April 1, 2005

quantizing the received signal to a point in a signal constellation plane, to provide a quantized point;

making a hard decision as to which constellation point the quantized point represents;

determining scaling factors (k's) associated with each constellation point;

using the scaling factors and hard decision point to determine decoder metrics; and

providing a decoder metrics and quantized point to a Viterbi decoder.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein making a hard decision as to which constellation point the quantized point represents comprises:

determining which constellation point is closest to the quantized point; and

assigning a value of the nearest constellation point to the quantized point.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12 wherein determining which constellation point is closest to the quantized point comprises:

computing a Euclidean distance squared between the quantized point and the candidate constellation point; and

selecting the constellation point with the smallest Euclidean distance squared as the closest constellation point.

Appln No. 10/027,824

Amdt date July 1, 2005

Reply to Office action of April 1, 2005

14. (Original) The method as in claim 13 wherein selecting the constellation point with a smallest Euclidean distance squared comprises:

(a) squaring an X direction distance between the quantized point and the candidate constellation point to provide a squared X direction distance;

(b) squaring a Y direction distance between the quantized point and the candidate constellation point to provide a squared Y direction distance;

(c) adding the squared X direction distance to the squared Y direction distance to find a Euclidean distance squared;

(d) repeating steps a, b and c for all candidate points;

(e) selecting the candidate point with a smallest Euclidean distance squared.

15. (Original) The method as in claim 11 wherein determining the scaling factors associated with each quantized point comprises:

determining an amount of noise necessary to create an error in a candidate bit; and

assigning the scaling factor in proportion to the amount of noise necessary to create an error in a candidate bit.

16. (Original) The method of claim 11 further comprising:
multiplying the scaling factors times a signal to noise ratio (SNR) scaling factor to provide a scaled SNR result; and
using the scaled SNR result to determine the decoder metrics.

Appln No. 10/027,824

Amdt date July 1, 2005

Reply to Office action of April 1, 2005

17. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein using the scaled SNR result to determine the decoder metrics comprises:

using the results as an index into a branch metric table;
and

reading the metric associated with the index.

18. (Original) An apparatus comprising:

an input for accepting a received signal;

a quantizer that accepts the received signal from the input and quantizes the input to a point in a signal constellation plane, to provide a quantized point;

a hard decision unit that accepts the quantized point and determines a constellation point that the quantized point represents;

a scaling factor unit that determines scaling factors associated with the constellation point; and

a metric calculator that accepts the scaling factors and the constellation points and determines branch metrics for the constellation points.

19. (Original) An apparatus of claim 18 further comprising:

a Viterbi decoder that accepts the constellation points and the branch metrics and produces decoded bits.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 18 wherein the metric calculator comprises:

Appln No. 10/027,824

Amdt date July 1, 2005

Reply to Office action of April 1, 2005

an input that accepts a signal to noise ratio (SNR);
an input that accepts scaling factors; and
a combination circuit that combines the scaling factors and
SNR to create a branch metric